General Assembly

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/64/426)]

64/223. Towards global partnerships

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 55/215 of 21 December 2000, 56/76 of 11 December 2001, 58/129 of 19 December 2003, 60/215 of 22 December 2005 and 62/211 of 19 December 2007,

Reaffirming the vital role of the United Nations, including the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in the promotion of partnerships in the context of globalization,

Underlining the intergovernmental nature of the United Nations, and the central role and responsibility of Governments in national and international policymaking,

Reaffirming its resolve to create an environment, at the national and global levels alike, that is conducive to sustainable economic development, poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability,

Taking note of the continuing increase in the number of public-private partnerships worldwide,

Recalling the objectives formulated in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[1] notably the Millennium Development Goals, and the reaffirmation they received in the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[2] particularly in regard to developing partnerships through the provision of greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society in general so as to enable them to contribute to the realization of the goals and programmes of the Organization, in particular in the pursuit of development and the eradication of poverty,

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit encouragement to pursue responsible business practices,

[1] See resolution 55/2.

[2] See resolution 60/1.

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Underlining the fact that cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, including the private sector, shall serve the purposes and principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, can make concrete contributions to the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits and their reviews, in particular in the area of development and the eradication of poverty, and shall be undertaken in a manner that maintains the integrity, impartiality and independence of the Organization,

Underlining also the importance of the contribution of the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society to the implementation of the outcomes of United Nations conferences in the economic, social and related fields,

Reiterating that maintaining a comprehensive and diverse multi-stakeholder follow-up process to the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development, including with civil society and the private sector, is critical, bearing in mind the core responsibility of all participants in the financing for development process to exercise ownership of it and to implement their respective commitments in an integrated fashion, and welcoming in this regard the active participation of civil society and private-sector entities,

Recognizing the need, where appropriate, for enhancing the capacity of Member States for their effective participation in partnerships, at all levels, in accordance with national priorities and national legislation, and encouraging international support for such efforts in developing countries,

Emphasizing that all relevant partners, including the private sector, can contribute in several ways to addressing the obstacles confronted by developing countries in mobilizing the resources needed to finance their sustainable development and to the realization of the development goals of the United Nations through, inter alia, financial resources, access to technology, management expertise and support for programmes, including through the reduced pricing of drugs, where appropriate, for the prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and other diseases,

Welcoming the efforts and encouraging further efforts by all relevant partners, including the private sector, to engage as reliable and consistent partners in the development process and to take into account not only the economic and financial, but also the developmental, social, human rights, gender and environmental implications of their undertakings and, in general, towards accepting and implementing corporate social and environmental responsibility, that is, bringing such values and responsibilities to bear on their conduct and policy premised on profit incentives, in conformity with national laws and regulations,

Underlining the fact that, in the face of the current multiple, interrelated global crises and challenges, such as the financial and economic crisis, the food crisis, volatile energy and commodity prices, and climate change, cooperation and increased commitment by all relevant partners, including the public sector, the private sector and civil society, are needed more than ever, and recognizing, in this context, the potential that partnerships have in contributing to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Reaffirming the principles of sustainable development, and underlining the need for a global consensus on the key values and principles that will promote

sustainable, fair and equitable economic development, and that corporate social and environmental responsibility are important elements of such a consensus,

Noting that the financial and economic crisis has demonstrated the need for values and principles in business, including for sustainable business practices, which in turn has led to broader private sector engagement in support of United Nations goals,

Recognizing the importance of promoting a gender perspective in global partnerships,

Taking note of the Principles for Responsible Investment initiative, created to help investors to integrate environmental, social and corporate governance issues into investment decisions, and the Principles for Responsible Management Education initiative, which seeks to embed corporate responsibility principles in business school curricula and research,

Welcoming the continuous efforts by the Commission on Sustainable Development, through its secretariat, to promote partnerships for sustainable development, inter alia, by the implementation and expansion of an interactive online database as a platform to provide access to information on partnerships and to facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices and by the regular holding of partnership fairs at the sessions of the Commission,

Taking note with appreciation of the progress achieved in the work of the United Nations on partnerships, notably in the framework of various United Nations organizations, agencies, funds, programmes, task forces, commissions and initiatives, such as the Global Compact, launched by the Secretary-General, the Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development[3] and the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships, and welcoming the establishment of a multitude of partnerships at the field level, entered into by various United Nations agencies, non-public partners and Member States, such as the United Nations Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development,

Recognizing the vital role the Global Compact Office continues to play with regard to strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to partner strategically with the private sector in accordance with its General Assembly mandate,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector;[4]

2. *Stresses* that partnerships are voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits;

3. *Also stresses* the importance of the contribution of voluntary partnerships to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, while reiterating that they are a complement to, but

[3] A/62/89-E/2007/76, annex.

[4] A/64/337.

not intended to substitute for, the commitment made by Governments with a view to achieving these goals;

4. *Further stresses* that partnerships should be consistent with national laws and national development strategies and plans, as well as the priorities of countries where their implementation takes place, bearing in mind the relevant guidance provided by Governments;

5. *Emphasizes* the vital role played by Governments in promoting responsible business practices, including providing the necessary legal and regulatory frameworks, where appropriate;

6. *Recalls* that the 2005 World Summit welcomed the positive contributions of the private sector and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in the promotion and implementation of development and human rights programmes, and also recalls that the 2005 World Summit resolved to enhance the contribution of non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders in national development efforts, as well as in the promotion of the global partnership for development, and encouraged public-private partnerships in the following areas: the generation of new investments and employment, financing for development, health, agriculture, conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and environmental management, energy, forestry and the impact of climate change;

7. *Recognizes* the role that public-private partnerships can play in efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, and in improving health as well as contributing to the implementation of national strategies and action plans, inter alia, on social services delivery and in making progress towards more equitable health outcomes, bearing in mind the need to ensure that their activities conform fully with the principle of national ownership of development strategies, and also recognizes the need for effective accountability and transparency in their implementation;

8. *Calls upon* the international community to continue to promote multi-stakeholder approaches in addressing the challenges of development in the context of globalization;

9. *Encourages* the United Nations system to continue to develop, for those partnerships in which it participates, a common and systemic approach, which places greater emphasis on impact, transparency, accountability and sustainability, without imposing undue rigidity in partnership agreements, and with due consideration being given to the following partnership principles: common purpose, transparency, bestowing no unfair advantages upon any partner of the United Nations, mutual benefit and mutual respect, accountability, respect for the modalities of the United Nations, striving for balanced representation of relevant partners from developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition, sectoral and geographic balance, and not compromising the independence and neutrality of the United Nations;

10. *Takes note with appreciation* of the efforts of the Secretary-General to streamline and update the United Nations guidelines for partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector, including through the approval of the revised Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector;

11. *Invites* the United Nations, when considering partnerships, to seek to engage in a more coherent manner with private sector entities that support the core values of the United Nations as reflected in the Charter and other relevant conventions and treaties and that commit to the principles of the Global Compact by

translating them into operational corporate policies, codes of conduct and management, monitoring and reporting systems;

12. *Calls upon* United Nations entities to ensure that information on the nature and scope of partnership arrangements with the private sector is available within the United Nations system, as well as to Member States and the public at large, so as to enhance transparency;

13. *Encourages* the Global Compact to continue its activities as an innovative public-private partnership to advance United Nations values and responsible business practices within the United Nations system and among the global business community, including through an increased number of local networks;

14. *Acknowledges* the positive contribution of the Global Compact and its ten principles in the promotion of responsible business practices;

15. *Takes note with interest* of the decision of the Secretary-General to hold an annual Private Sector Forum, beginning with the United Nations Private Sector Forum in September 2008, focusing on food sustainability and achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and followed by the United Nations Leadership Forum on Climate Change in September 2009;

16. *Welcomes* the collaboration between the African Private Sector Forum and the Global Compact, and encourages the strengthening of this partnership in conjunction with the Commission of the African Union to support the development of the African private sector, the promotion of public-private partnership projects and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in line with the relevant executive decisions of the African Union;

17. *Welcomes* the establishment of the Global Compact Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean in Bogotá, aiming at providing support to the Global Compact Local Networks and at promoting social and environmental responsibility and public-private partnerships for development in the region;

18. *Acknowledges* the ongoing work of the United Nations on partnerships, notably in the framework of various United Nations organizations, agencies, funds, programmes, task forces and commissions, within their respective mandates, and in this regard encourages the provision of adequate training, as appropriate;

19. *Encourages* the relevant United Nations organizations and agencies to share relevant lessons learned and positive experiences from partnerships, including with the business community, as a contribution to the development of more effective United Nations partnerships;

20. *Takes note with appreciation* of the efforts of the Secretary-General to enhance partnership management through the promotion of adequate training at all levels concerned, institutional capacity in country offices, strategic focus and local ownership, the sharing of best practices and the improvement of partner selection processes, calls upon United Nations entities that engage the private sector as partners in their work to develop the policy frameworks and institutional capacities needed for engagement in a mutually beneficial way, and encourages the further development of United Nations private sector focal points for the purposes of learning and sharing best practices and information;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to promote, within existing resources, impact-assessment mechanisms of partnerships, taking into account best tools available, in order to enable effective management,

ensure accountability and facilitate effective learning from both successes and failures;

22. *Welcomes* innovative approaches to using partnerships as a means to better implement goals and programmes, in particular in support of the pursuit of development and the eradication of poverty, encourages relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, and invites the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization to further explore such possibilities, bearing in mind their different mandates, modes of operation and objectives, as well as the particular roles of the non-public partners involved;

23. *Recommends*, in this context, that partnerships should also foster the elimination of all forms of discrimination, including on gender grounds, in respect of employment and occupation;

24. *Reiterates its call upon*:

(*a*) All bodies within the United Nations system that engage in partnerships to ensure the integrity and independence of the Organization and to include information on partnerships in their regular reporting, as appropriate, on their websites and through other means;

(*b*) Partners to provide to and exchange relevant information with Governments, other stakeholders and the relevant United Nations agencies and bodies and other international organizations with which they engage, in an appropriate way, including through reports, with particular attention to the importance of sharing among partnerships information on their practical experience;

25. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

66th plenary meeting
21 December 2009